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AUTHOR Fontenot, Karen
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ABSTRACT

This 8-item test is intended to help adult basic education teachers obtain a quick assessment of the prereading skills that their beginning adult readers have already mastered. The individual items of the test are designed to assess the following: ability to write one's own name; left-to-right orientation; perceptual hearing; sound-letter and visual letter recognition; and symbol, letter, and sound reproduction. (MN)

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FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

ADULT BEGINNING READING SKILLS DIAGNOSIS

Karen Fontenot

Instructions for Teachers

This test is a quick assessment of prereading skills for beginning adult readers to help the teacher identify which reading skills the student has already mastered. It must be administered *orally*, and the student must be able to understand the directions given by the teacher. The following describes each item and gives the student action that the teacher must request.

1. *Student writes own name.* The teacher can determine the hand-eye coordination by watching the student write. If student cannot write own name, this should be the first priority. *Action*: Have student write own name in blank.

2. *Left to right orientation.* Have student point to the symbols while "reading" them. If student starts from the right or in the middle, provide exercises that move the eye slowly from left to right and quickly from right to left again. Do not count off if the student does not know the exact name of a symbol. Watch student's fingers to determine if the reading is from left to right. *Action*: Ask the student to "read" the symbols.

3. *Perceptual hearing test.* Students with perceptual hearing problems will not be able to hear the difference between the minimal pairs. If the student misses one or more, provide exercises on listening to different spoken sounds. *Action*: Have the student circle the "=" marks for sounds that are alike or circle the "X" if they are not alike. Say the following pairs: (1) Pit/Bit, (2) Death/Debt, (3) Mat/Met, and (4)Bet/Bet.

4. *Sound-letter recognition.* Student circles the letter(s) that make the sound pronounced by the teacher. If the student

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This classroom aid was developed by Karen Fontenot while at the Region XI Education Service Center, Fort Worth, Texas, and is disseminated by TRENDS PROJECT, Region II Eduation Service Center, 209 North Water Street, Corpus Christi, Texas 78401.

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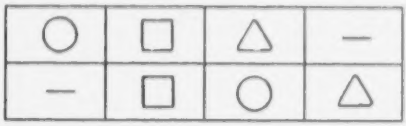
Adult Beginning Reading Skills Diagnosis
Student Answer Sheet

1. Name: _____

2. Left to Right



3. Pairs

1. = X
2. = X
3. = X
4. = X

4. Letter Recognition

A. Consonants		
N	M	B
K	D	T
B	V	P
Z	S	C

B. Vowels	
E	A
I	O
E	U
Y	A

C. Blends	
BR	BL
GR	GL
CL	CR
STR	SL

5. Letter Recognition

P

F K

H F

P B

H

6. Symbol Reproduction

ə	/	⊿	⌊	d	b	±

7. Letter Reproduction

Gordon likes to go to the zoo.

_____

8. Sound Reproduction

A. Consonants									
d	f	h	k	l	p	r	s	v	w

B. Digraphs			
ch	ph	sh	th

C. Blends			
br	dr	fl	pr

marks all the above minimal pairs correctly, the sound-letter recognition errors are usually because the student does not know the letters and not because the student does not hear the sound of the letters properly. Drills on letters and letter sounds can improve this skill. *Action*: A. Have the student circle the letter that makes the following *consonant* sound: (1) M, (2) T, (3) B, and (4) Z. B. Pronounce each sound and have the student circle the letter that makes the following *vowel* sound: (1) short "a", (2) short "i", (3) long "e", and (4) long "a". C. Say the following *blends* and have the student circle the letters that make the following sounds: (1) Bl, (2) Gr, (3) Cr, and (4) Str.

5. *Visual letter recognition.* This tests the ability to remember a visual symbol and match it to an identical one in another column. Students having trouble with this exercise may have serious perceptual problems. Exercises in finding letters in a row of letters may help remedy this problem. *Action*: Have student draw lines to the letters in the second column that match the letters in the first column.

6. *Symbol reproduction.* Inability to reproduce the symbols correctly may indicate a perceptual problem. The brain may reverse the symbol or see incomplete images. The eyes may not be able to focus clearly on an image long enough for the hand to reproduce it. Hand-eye coordination may be a problem. In this case, drawing simple pictures may help. *Action*: On the answer sheet, have the student reproduce the symbols in the squares. Look for reversals.

7. *Letter reproduction.* As student copies sentence, the teacher can note if spaces are left between words, if words are skipped, and if reversals are made. If these occur, a perceptual problem may exist or writing may be new and confusing to the student. Whatever the problem, the teacher can point out any writing problems and provide daily writing practice. *Action*: Have the student copy the sentence. Look for letter reversals, spacing problems, and skipping letters or words.

8. *Sound reproduction.* Have student say the sound of the letter and not its name. For example, the teacher can show the letter *t* makes a /t/ sound. If the student says the name of the letter, ask after each letter for the sound it makes. Have students try to pronounce the sounds. If student cannot pronounce any consonants, start with drills on letter sounds followed by practice on blending sounds to make words. *Action*: A. Have the student tell you the *sounds* of the consonants. Point to the letter. B. Have the student pronounce each digraph. C. Have the student pronounce each blend.